Office for National Statistics

Statistical bulletin

Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 9 June 2022

Early experimental data and analysis on economic activity and social change in the UK. These real-time indicators are created using rapid response surveys, novel data sources and experimental methods.

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Next release:
16 June 2022

Notice

9 June 2022

Data for the number of shipping visits are unavailable this week because of technical issues. We hope to reinstate these data in next week's publication and will include this week's data at that time if possible.

Online job advert estimates provided by Adzuna are not available for this week's bulletin. Data will be published as normal for this indicator in next week's publication.

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1 . Main points

Users should note that some of the increases and decreases seen in the latest week coincide with the Jubilee bank holidays.

- Consumer behaviour indicators showed rises in the latest week, with aggregate UK credit and debit card purchases increasing by 6 percentage points and UK seated diners increasing by 23 percentage points, while the number of visits to "retail and recreation" locations rose by 8% (Bank of England CHAPS data, OpenTable, Google Mobility). Section 3.

- In the week including the Jubilee Bank Holidays, company incorporations and voluntary dissolution applications fell by 39% and 35%, respectively; potential redundancies were 67% of their pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) level in the week to 29 May 2022 (Companies House, Insolvency Service). Section 4.

- More than a quarter (26%) of UK businesses reported inflation of goods and services prices as their main concern for July 2022, up 6 percentage points from the end of February 2022 (21%) (initial results from Wave 58 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS)). Section 4.

- Transport indicators were stable this week, with both daily UK flights and road traffic unchanged from the previous week (EUROCONTROL, Department for Transport). Section 5.

- The System Average Price (SAP) of gas is now 30% of the peak on 10 March 2022 having increased by 10% in the latest week (to 5 June 2022) (National Grid).

Results presented in this bulletin are experimental and may be subject to revision. Data sources used to compile these indicators are regularly reviewed to ensure representatively and relevance which may mean indicators change at short notice.

2 . Latest indicators at a glance

Notes:

1. The break in the available shipping data (from 14 to 19 June 2021) is when the data collection system changed.

2. Shipping data are unavailable for the week to 5 June 2022 because of technical issues.

3. Online job advert estimates provided by Adzuna are not available for this week's bulletin.

4. For aggregate UK spending on debit and credit cards, Wednesday 1 June 2022 is compared with Thursday 26 May 2022, as there is no data for Thursday 2 June 2022 as it was a Bank Holiday.

3 . Consumer behaviour

The UK credit and debit card purchases indicator increased by 6 percentage points to 108% of its February 2020 average in the week to Wednesday 1 June 2022 (compared with Thursday 26 May) with increases across all spending categories. The highest of these was in the “staple” category, which rose by 9 percentage points.

UK seated diners increased by 23 percentage points in the week to 5 June 2022, with seated diners in Manchester rising by 53 percentage points while seated diners in London decreased by 7 percentage points from the previous week.

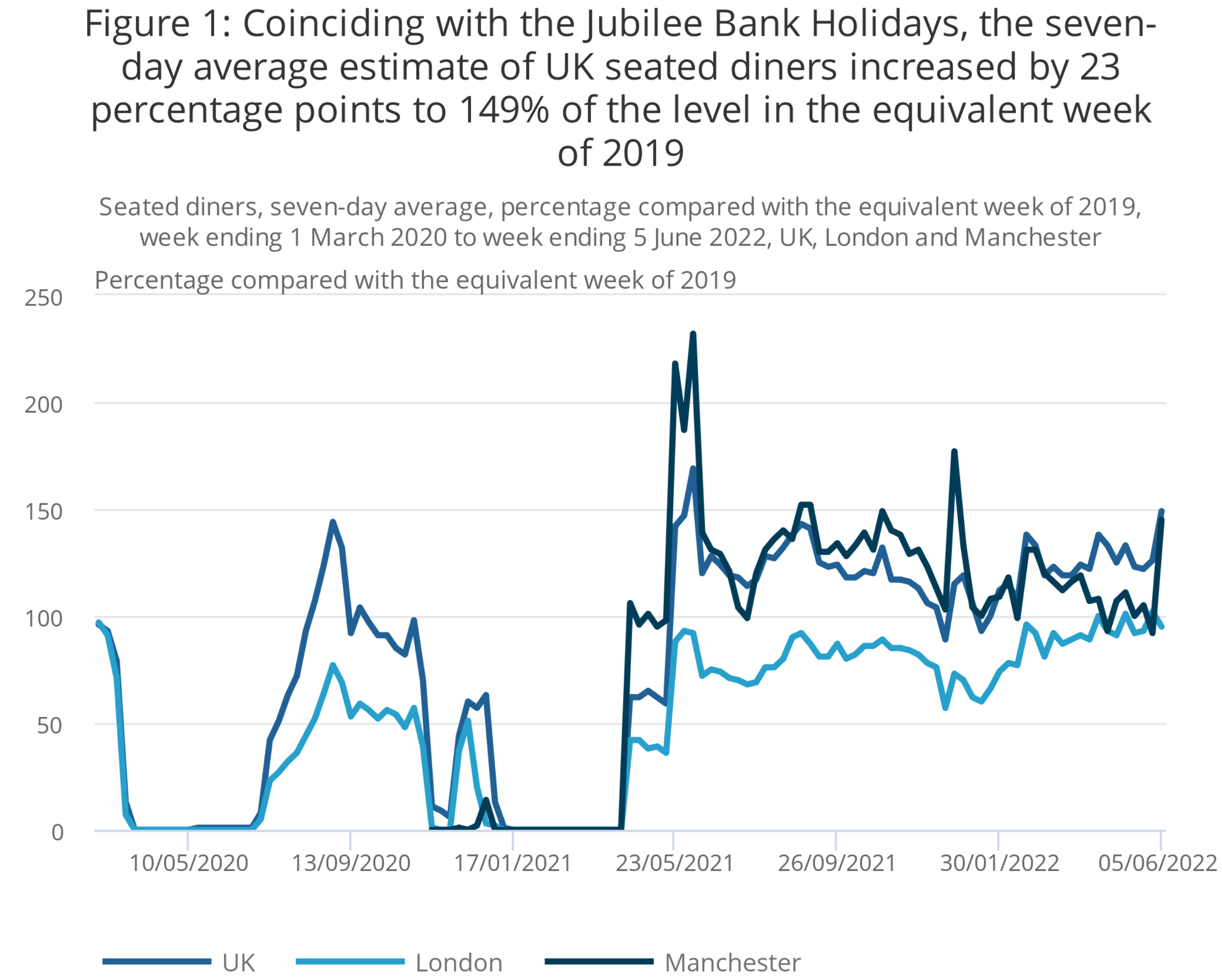
Google Mobility data showed that visits to "retail and recreation" increased by 8% from the previous week and are 3% below pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) levels.

Transactions at Pret A Manger stores decreased in all regional locations except Yorkshire in the latest week, with Manchester and London city worker stores seeing the largest week-on-week falls of 31 and 24 percentage points, respectively.

OpenTable seated diners

Figure 1: Coinciding with the Jubilee Bank Holidays, the seven-day average estimate of UK seated diners increased by 23 percentage points to 149% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019

Seated diners, seven-day average, percentage compared with the equivalent week of 2019, week ending 1 March 2020 to week ending 5 June 2022, UK, London and Manchester



Source: OpenTable

Notes:

1. Please note that data for Manchester are only available from week ending 15 November 2020.

In the latest week, the seven-day average estimate of seated diners in Manchester increased by 53 percentage points and was 145% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2020. This is the largest week-on-week increase in Manchester for six months (26 December 2021).

In London there was a week-on-week fall of 7 percentage points, to 95% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2020.

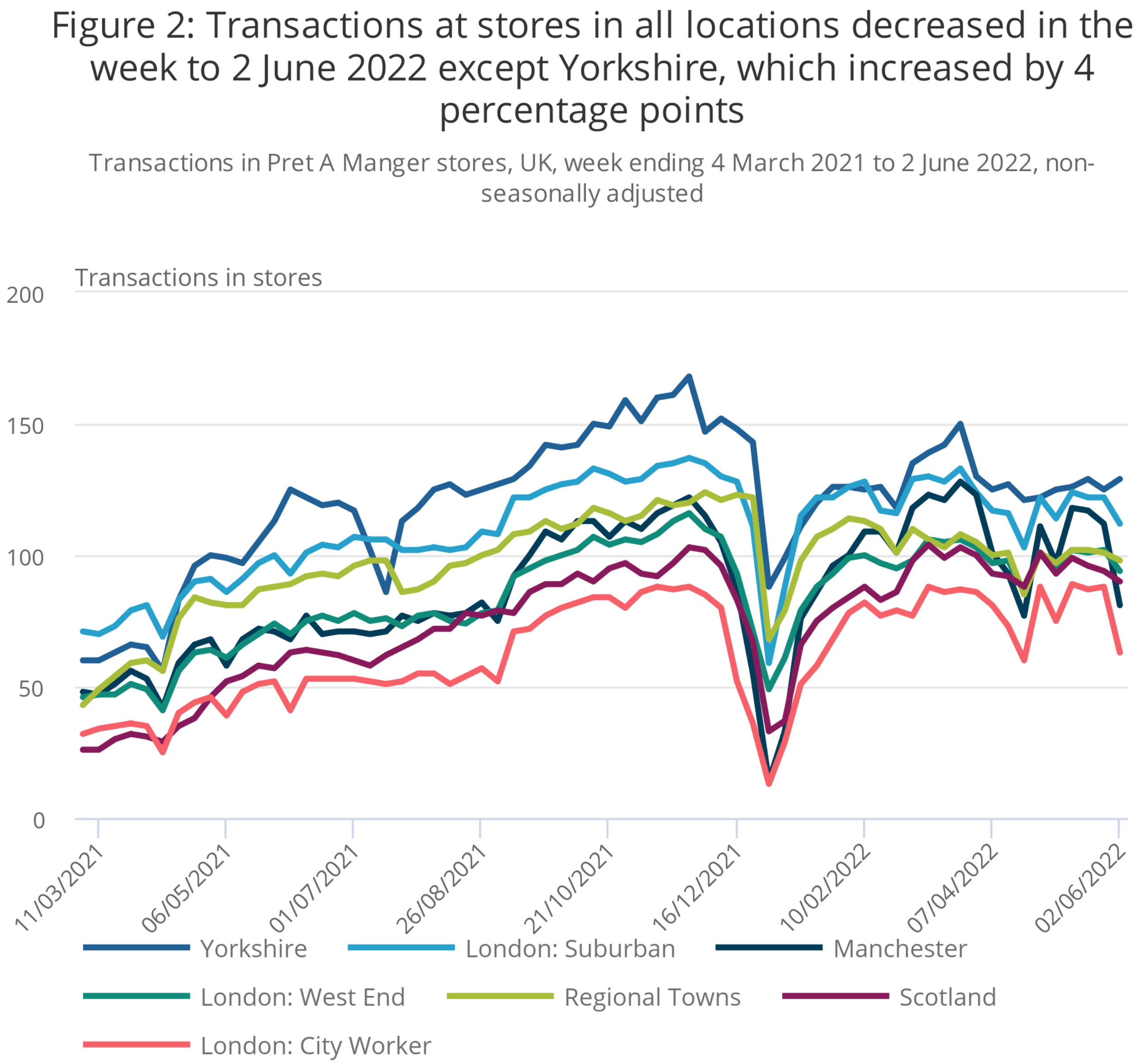
Transactions at Pret A Manger

Pret A Manger is a sandwich and coffee shop franchise chain, operating around 400 stores across the UK. Its transactional data are presented as an index and show total weekly till transactions at Pret A Manger shops as a proportion of the average weekly level in the first four weeks of 2020 (between Friday 3 January and Thursday 30 January 2020). Because of this comparison across the data time series, users should expect an element of seasonality in the data.

More information on the areas featured is available in our Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology. These data are also made available every Tuesday through the Bloomberg Pret Index.

Figure 2: Transactions at stores in all locations decreased in the week to 2 June 2022 except Yorkshire, which increased by 4 percentage points

Transactions in Pret A Manger stores, UK, week ending 4 March 2021 to 2 June 2022, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: Pret A Manger

Notes:

1. Dine-in services in England were suspended during the third national lockdown, which remained in place until Step 3 (17 May 2021) of England's roadmap out of lockdown.

2. Users should note not all store locations reopened as coronavirus restrictions were eased.

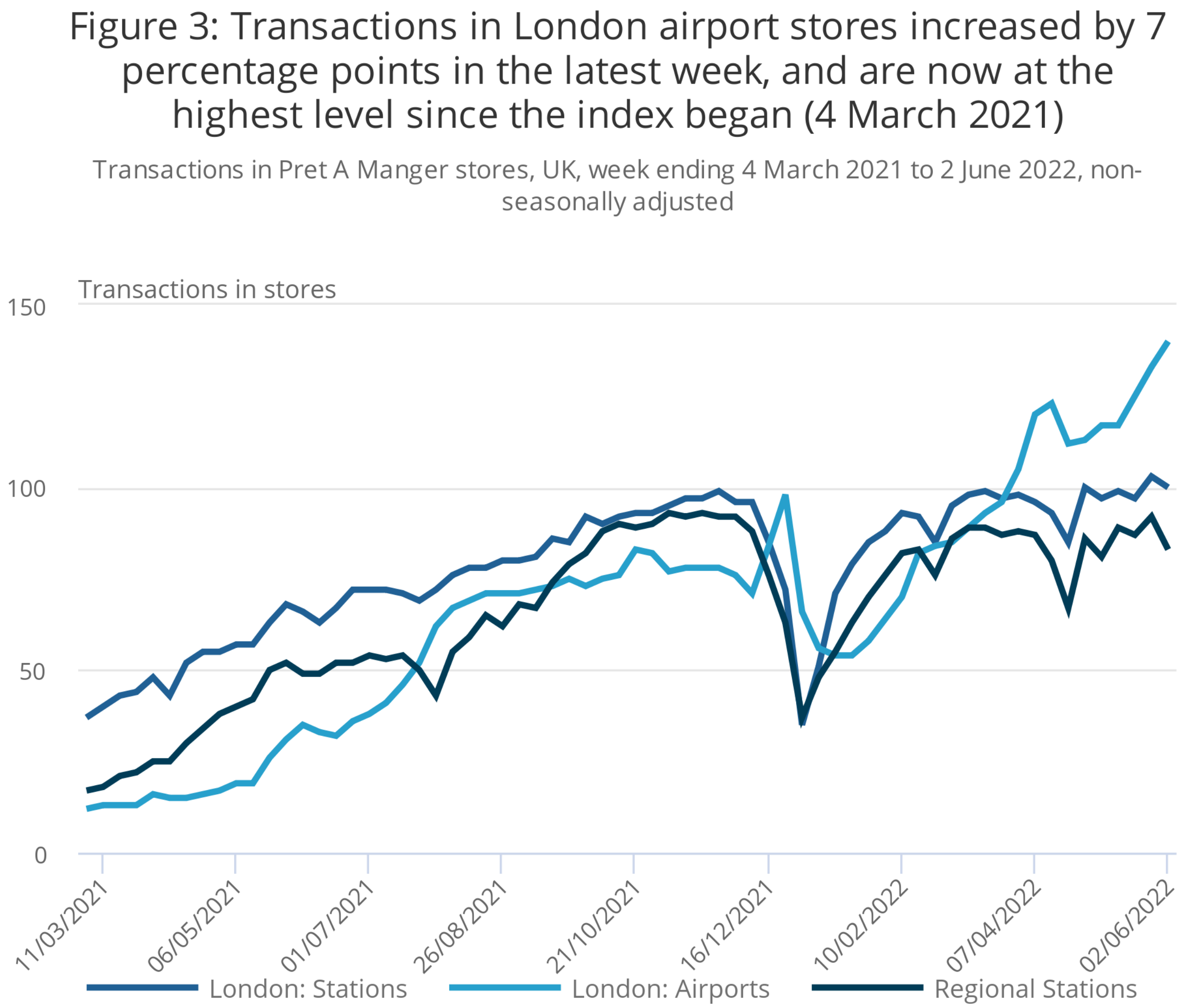
3. The index begins on 4 March 2021 as most stores were closed before this therefore the corresponding indices were mostly zero.

Yorkshire continued to have the highest number of transactions compared with its January 2020 average, at 129%.

Manchester and London city worker stores saw the largest week-on-week falls of 31 and 24 percentage points, respectively.

Figure 3: Transactions in London airport stores increased by 7 percentage points in the latest week, and are now at the highest level since the index began (4 March 2021)

Transactions in Pret A Manger stores, UK, week ending 4 March 2021 to 2 June 2022, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: Pret A Manger

UK spending on debit and credit cards: Daily CHAPS-based indicator

These data series are experimental faster indicators for estimating UK spending on credit and debit cards. They track the daily CHAPS payments made by credit and debit card payment processors to around 100 major UK retail corporates. These payments are the proceeds of recent credit and debit card transactions made by customers at their stores, both through physical and online platforms.More information on the indicator is provided in the accompanying methodology article.

Companies are allocated to one of four categories based on their primary business:

- "staples" refers to companies that sell essential goods that households need to purchase, such as food and utilities

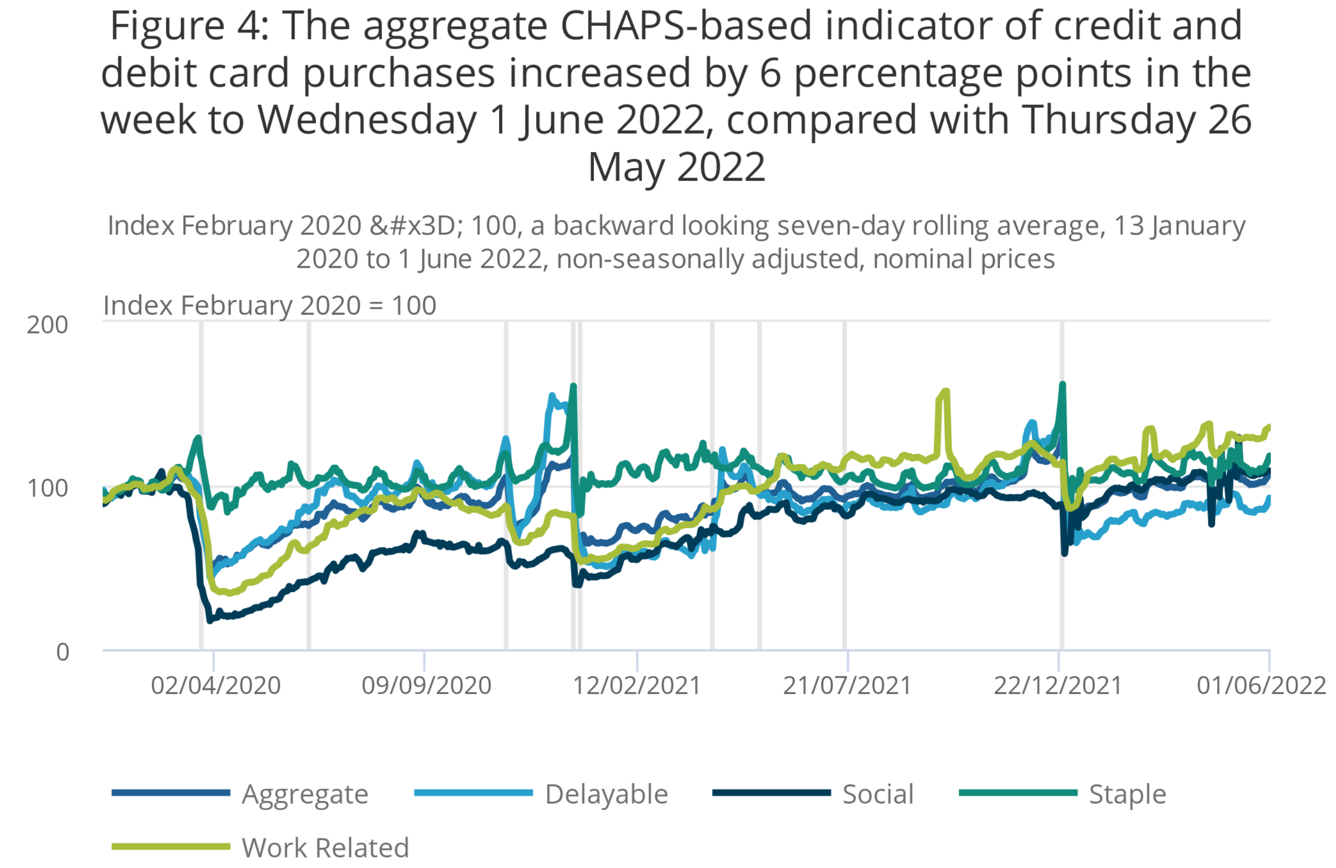
- "work-related" refers to companies providing public transport or selling petrol

- "delayable" refers to companies selling goods whose purchase could be delayed, such as clothing or furnishings

- "social" refers to spending on travel and eating out

Figure 4: The aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 6 percentage points in the week to Wednesday 1 June 2022, compared with Thursday 26 May 2022

Index February 2020 = 100, a backward looking seven-day rolling average, 13 January 2020 to 1 June 2022, non-seasonally adjusted, nominal prices



Source: Office for National Statistics and Bank of England calculations

Notes:

1. Users should note the daily payment data are the sum of card transactions processed up to the previous working day, so there is a slight time lag when compared with real-life events on the chart.

2. The vertical lines indicate notable events and coronavirus (COVID-19) restriction changes.

3. Percentage point difference is derived from current week and previous week index before rounding.

Figure 4 shows changes in the value of CHAPS payments received by large UK corporates from their credit and debit card processors, "merchant acquirers".

In the week to Wednesday 1 June 2022 (compared with Thursday 26 May 2022), the CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 6 percentage points from the previous week, to 108% of its February 2020 average level.

The spending categories recorded the following changes in the latest week:

- “staple” increased by 9 percentage points
- “delayable” increased by 7 percentage points
- “work-related” increased by 7 percentage points
- “social” increased by 1 percentage points

“Work-related”, “staple” and “social” spending were all above their February 2020 average levels at 136%, 118% and 109%, respectively. “Delayable” spending meanwhile remained below its February 2020 average levels at 92%.

UK spending on debit and credit cards: Monthly CHAPS-based indicator

The monthly CHAPS-based indicator of aggregate credit and debit card spending was at 104% of its February 2020 average level in May 2022. This is 18 percentage points higher than in January 2022 (87%) and 6 percentage points higher than May 2021 (99%).

The monthly data time series is available in the accompanying CHAPS dataset and includes methodological notes that users should bear in mind. The monthly CHAPS index is calculated by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), rather than being an additional series that is produced and validated by the Bank of England.

4 . Business and workforce

In the latest week, company incorporations and voluntary dissolution applications fell by 39% and 35%, respectively. This coincided with the Jubilee Bank Holidays and these falls may be attributed to this.

Potential redundancies increased to 67% of their pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) level in the week to 29 May 2022, while the number of employers proposing redundancies was 83% of this.

Small business sales decreased by 9% in April 2022 compared with March 2022 and were 120% of the level seen in April 2019. All sectors experienced negative sales growth in the latest month.

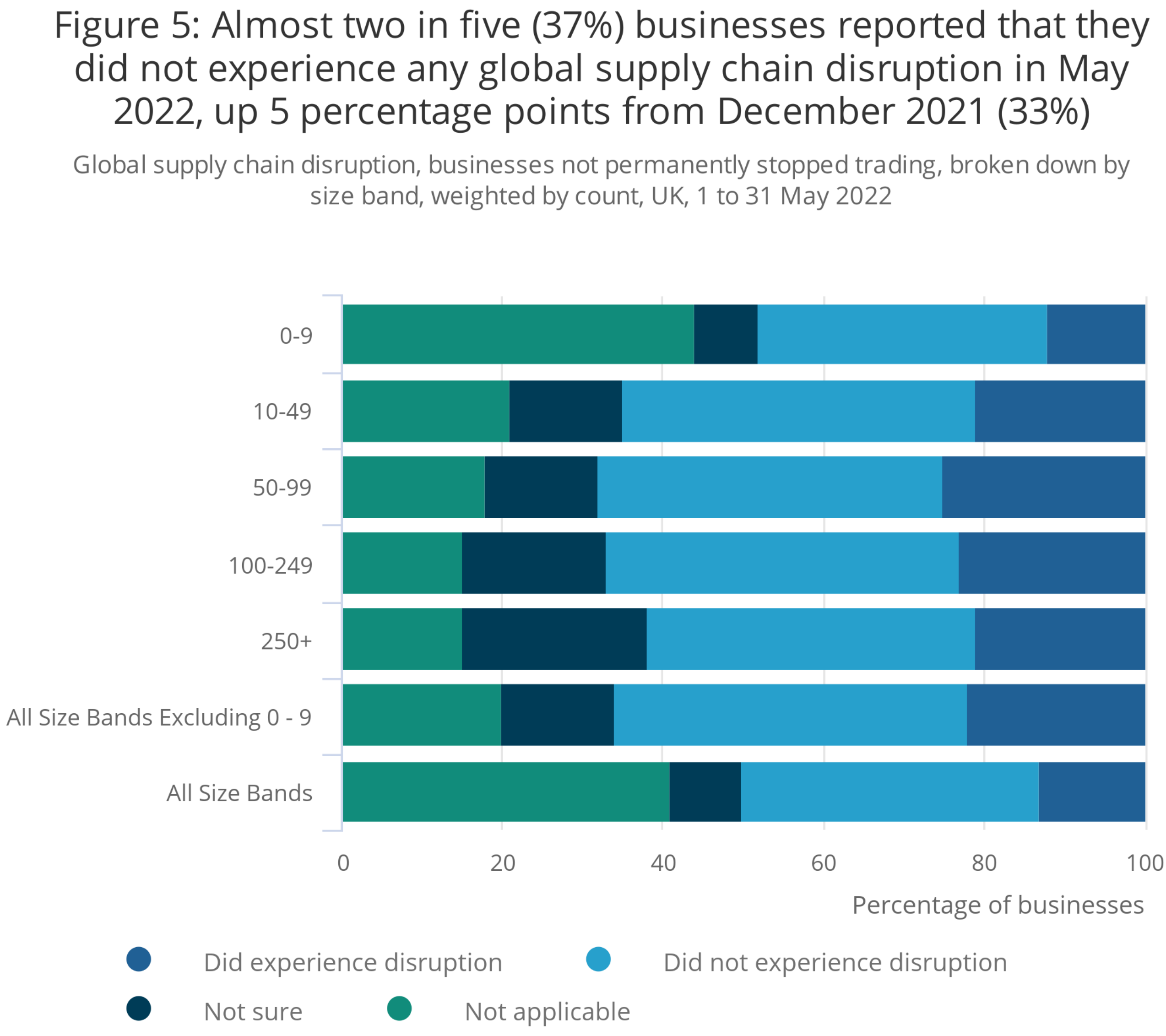
Small business jobs fell 4% in April 2022 when compared with the previous month and were 90% of the level seen in 2019. All sectors experienced negative job growth except “Other services”, which increased by 1% compared with March 2022.

Business impact and insights

Initial results from Wave 58 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) cover the reference period 1 May to 31 May 2022, with a response rate of 19.5% (7,662 responses). The survey was live for the period 30 May to 7 June 2022.

Figure 5: Almost two in five (37%) businesses reported that they did not experience any global supply chain disruption in May 2022, up 5 percentage points from December 2021 (33%)

Global supply chain disruption, businesses not permanently stopped trading, broken down by size band, weighted by count, UK, 1 to 31 May 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS)

Notes:

1. Initial weighted results, Wave 58 of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS).
2. Bars may not sum to 100% because of rounding and percentages less than 1% being removed for disclosure purposes.
3. Size bands refer to the number of employees in a business.

Table 1: More than a quarter (26%) of UK businesses reported inflation of goods and services prices as their main concern for their businesses for July 2022, up 6 percentage points from the end of February 2022 (21%)
Business concern, businesses not permanently stopped trading, weighted by count, UK, 1 to 31 July 2022

	All Industries
Inflation of goods and services prices	26%
No concerns for my business	24%
Energy prices	20%
Not sure	8%
Competition	5%
Taxation	5%
Supply chain disruption	4%
Other	3%
Business rates	2%
Exchange rates	2%
Interest rates	1%

Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS)

Notes

1. Initial weighted results Wave 58 of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS).

2. Rows may not sum to 100% because of rounding and percentages less than 1% being removed for disclosure purposes.

5 . Transport

Transport indicators were stable this week. Daily UK flight levels compared with the equivalent week of 2019 were at 85% in the week to 5 June 2022, which was broadly similar to the previous week (86%).

Road traffic on Monday 6 June was unchanged from the previous week, at 97% of the level seen on the Monday of the first week in February 2020. Similarly, car, light commercial and heavy goods vehicle traffic were broadly similar to the previous week.

UK flight data

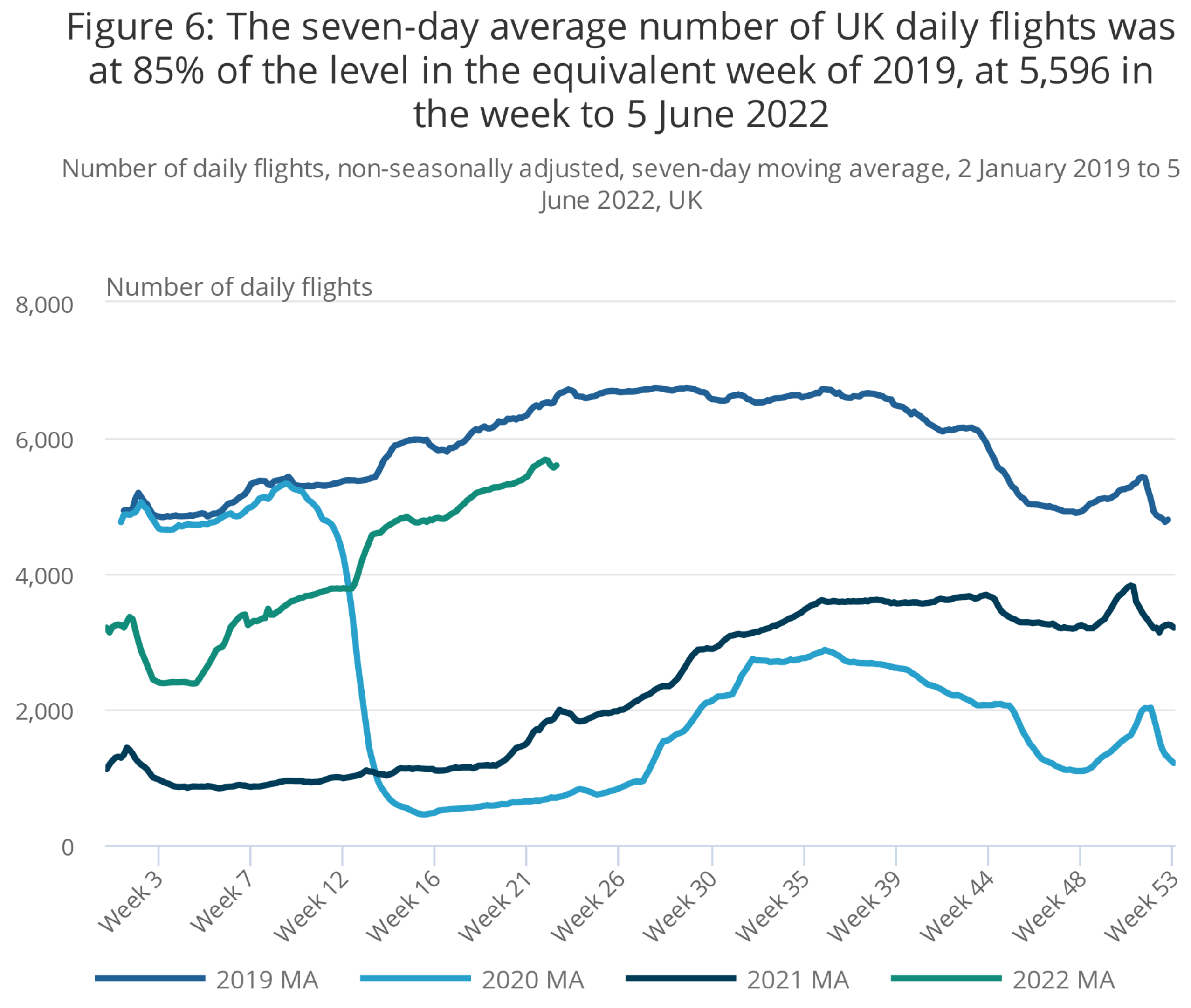
These data are daily flight figures from the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation (EUROCONTROL). Daily flight numbers for the UK alongside other countries are available in EUROCONTROL's dashboard. EUROCONTROL is a pan-European, civil-military organisation dedicated to supporting European aviation. Its Aviation Intelligence and Performance Review Unit provides independent collection and validation of air navigation services' performance-related data and intelligence gathering.

The flights data include international arrivals and departures to and from the UK (including Crown dependencies) and domestic UK flights but exclude overflights (flights that pass over UK territory). They capture all flight movements that operate under Instrument Flight Rules (IFR), where the pilot uses instruments in the flight deck to control, guide and adjust the plane. This includes commercial flights carrying passengers and cargo as well as non-commercial flights such as private and military flights.

Data from EUROCONTROL do not include information on the volume of passengers or cargo carried on UK flights. Especially in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, flights might not be operating at full capacity and therefore trends in passengers and cargo will differ from trends in flights presented here.

Figure 6: The seven-day average number of UK daily flights was at 85% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019, at 5,596 in the week to 5 June 2022

Number of daily flights, non-seasonally adjusted, seven-day moving average, 2 January 2019 to 5 June 2022, UK



Source: European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation (EUROCONTROL)

The seven-day average number of UK daily flights was unchanged from previous week (5,596) and was at 85% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2019.

Although the number of flights has been trending upwards, this is the sixth consecutive week where the number of flights compared with the equivalent week of 2019 was broadly unchanged, and follows the peak in this series of 86% in the week to 29 May 2022.

The full data time series available for UK flights can be found in the accompanying daily UK flights dataset, which contains daily flight numbers and the rolling seven-day averages.

6 . Data

Advance potential redundancies
Dataset | Released 9 June 2022
Weekly dataset showing the number of potential redundancies and employers proposing redundancies, submitted to Insolvency Service via HR1 forms.

Traffic camera activity
Dataset | Released 9 June 2022
Experimental daily traffic camera counts data for busyness indices covering the UK.

System Average Price (SAP) of gas
Dataset | Released 9 June 2022
Daily and rolling average System Average Price (SAP) of gas traded in the UK.

Vehicle Flows Around Ports
Dataset | Released 9 June 2022
Monthly data showing vehicle flows around major ports in England. Contains average 15-minute sensor counts by size of vehicle, and average speeds.

Daily vehicle flows around ports
Dataset | Released 9 June 2022
Daily data showing vehicle flows around major ports in England. Contains average 15-minute sensor counts by size of vehicle, and average speeds.

Transactions at Pret A Manger
Dataset | Released 9 June 2022
Weekly transactional data from approximately 400 Pret A Manger stores around the UK.

UK spending on credit and debit cards
Dataset | Released 9 June 2022
Experimental indicator for monitoring UK retail purchases derived from the Bank of England's CHAPS data.

From 29 April 2022, the latest estimates from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN), which provides insights into daily life and events including people’s experiences regarding cost of living, goods shortages and working from home, are available fortnightly within our Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain bulletin.

Users should note that this section lists a selection of the data available with this publication. For the full list of available datasets please see the accompanying dataset page.

7 . Glossary

Real-time indicator

A real-time indicator provides insights into economic activity using close-to-real-time big data, administrative data sources, rapid response surveys or Experimental Statistics, which represent useful economic and social concepts.

8 . Measuring the data

Information on the methodology used to produce the indicators in this bulletin is available in the Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology.

9 . Strengths and limitations

These statistics have been produced to provide timely indicators of the effect of developing world events on the UK economy and society, using close-to-real-time big data, administrative data sources, rapid response surveys or Experimental Statistics.

The data presented in this bulletin are reviewed and refreshed on a regular basis. Indicators are swapped in and out of the publication based on their suitability and availability.

UK coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions

A full overview of coronavirus restrictions for each of the four UK constituent countries can be found:

- coronavirus in England
- coronavirus in Scotland
- coronavirus in Wales
- coronavirus in Northern Ireland

These restrictions should be considered when interpreting the data featured throughout this bulletin.

Seasonality

Seasonal fluctuations are likely to be present in many of these indicators so caution must be applied when interpreting changes in series that are not seasonally adjusted.

10 . Related links

[Coronavirus (COVID-19) latest data and analysis]
Webpage | Updated as and when data become available
Latest data on the coronavirus in the UK and its effect on the economy and society.

[Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain]
Bulletin | Released 27 May 2022
Latest indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey.

[Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional]
Bulletin | Released 31 May 2022
Provisional counts of deaths registered in England and Wales, including deaths involving COVID-19, in the latest weeks for which data are available.

[Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Survey, UK]
Bulletin | Released 1 June 2022
Initial data from the COVID-19 Infection Survey (delivered in partnership with IQVIA, the University of Oxford and Lighthouse laboratories).